



I am pleased to send greetings in recognition of World Trade Week. This event has a long history dating back to President Franklin Roosevelt officially proclaiming the first World Trade Week in 1935. Today, Roosevelt's vision of active engagement with the rest of the world is still relevant. History proves that America moves forward by engaging with the world and exporting not just our goods and services, but also our principles of freedom and prosperity.

Consider the progress since 1950. Today our economy is five times larger and exports have expanded by a factor of 20. Over the last decade, U.S. exports have accounted for a significant share of our economic growth and support millions of American jobs. About one of every five factory jobs – 20 percent of all jobs in America – depends on exports. The wages of those working in plants that export are roughly 18 percent higher than those who work in plants that do not export.

Last year, the United States exported more than \$1 trillion of goods and services, making us the world's largest exporter. World Trade Week is an opportune time to highlight the accomplishments of U.S. exporters and the great potential for further expanding our trade. This is especially true of small- and medium-sized American companies, which make up 97 percent of U.S. exporting firms.

The Bush Administration is committed to ensuring a level playing field for American firms competing in the global economy. Toward this end, we are taking strong and definitive steps on multiple fronts, including pursuing bilateral, regional, and multilateral free trade agreements (FTAs), facilitating the promotion of U.S. exports, strengthening our enforcement mechanisms, and improving the foundations of America's economy.

We continue our efforts to open new markets and lower trade barriers through FTA negotiations. Currently we are in talks with Bahrain, Panama, Thailand, four Andean countries, and five member countries of the South African Customs Union. We recently concluded FTAs with five Central American countries, Australia, Morocco, and the Dominican Republic, and at the beginning of this year, American companies were able to start taking advantage of FTAs with Chile and Singapore.

Working with our neighbors in the Western Hemisphere, we hope to create a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). This Administration is dedicated to moving forward with the global trade talks at the World Trade Organization. These negotiations offer the best chance of bringing economic rewards to Americans and to people around the globe.

We have increased coordination of our trade policy and promotional efforts and are implementing a National Export Strategy that will streamline bureaucracies and focus our agencies on collaboration and continuous program improvement. American companies now benefit from better government-wide support in negotiating more open markets, including aggressive export promotion strategies for following up in each of the new FTAs.

Our efforts to expand America's export opportunities also mean that we are taking proactive measures to enforce trade agreements and implement policies that help America's businesses. We have spoken with American manufacturers about barriers to growth that they are facing in the United States and abroad. In this context, we are implementing the recommendations found in the Department's report, *Manufacturing in America*, including the creation of an Unfair Trade Practices Task Force and the development of a supply chain initiative to help U.S. businesses sell their components to foreign companies.

We are also taking broader measures to help America's economy grow and reduce the costs of doing business for our exporters. The President has acted to make American companies more competitive. Tax cuts were vital to creating an environment of growth and innovation, and they must be made permanent. The President has also proposed reducing unnecessary regulations; making health care costs more affordable; reforming the legal system to cut down on frivolous lawsuits; and enacting a national energy policy that ensures an affordable supply of energy and reduces our dependence on foreign oil.

As we celebrate World Trade Week in cities across the Nation, I hope there will be a greater understanding of the benefits of trade in our communities, as well as a greater appreciation of our mutual relationships that link Americans with people around the world.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. L. Evans', with a stylized, cursive script.

Donald L. Evans